

RECYCLING IQ KIT GRANT GUIDELINES

The Recycling IQ Kit has been designed to provide steps, tools, and resources to help improve the quality of your recycling program.

Updated for CY20

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Curbside Guidelines

Overview

Use this document to learn how to apply for funding and technical assistance to implement the [Recycling IQ Kit in a curbside community](#). The Recycling IQ Kit has been designed to provide steps, tools, and resources to help improve the quality of your recycling program. Increasing the quality of the recycling stream can save on recycling and disposal fees, improve resident satisfaction with your program, and ensure the success and sustainability of the recycling system.

The toolkit includes:

- Tips for engaging with your MRF and hauler
- Instructions and tools for targeted messages
- Tools for tracking and reporting results
- Customizable artwork for education and outreach
- Resources for implementation of direct curbside feedback

Curbside communities awarded the Recycling IQ Kit grant will receive funds for printing and distribution of education materials (collateral), hiring staff for curbside enforcement and data tracking, and technical assistance from their Municipal Assistance Coordinator. Grantees must implement all of the prescribed elements of the Recycling IQ Kit. Note: You do not need to be awarded the grant to use the Curbside Recycling IQ Kit and its accompanying resources – the resources are open source and available for use by anyone at any time.

Eligible Applicants

Massachusetts municipalities with greater than 10% contamination, as reported by their MRF, are welcome to apply. Curbside recycling programs are limited to a maximum of two Recycling IQ Kit grants.

Application Submission Process

1. Read the Curbside Recycling IQ Kit and all of the accompanying resources.
2. Speak with your Municipal Assistance Coordinator to determine your readiness for implementing the prescribed Recycling IQ Kit elements; grantees must be willing to reject contaminated recycling carts or bins at the curb.
3. Apply for Recycling IQ Kit Technical Assistance via [Re-TRAC Connect™](#).
4. Municipal Recycling Data Reporting
 - a. At the time the application is submitted, applicants must have completed and submitted via Re-TRAC Connect™ Municipal Recycling and Solid Waste Surveys for the two previous calendar years.

Evaluation criteria

This is a competitive grant. Applicants will be evaluated on criteria that may include, but not be limited to:

- Information provided on Recycling and Solid Waste Program Surveys.
- Information provided in the application.
- Past grant performance, including outstanding grant requirements.
- Demonstrated contamination issue i.e., contamination of the recycling at greater than 10% as reported by your MRF, and consisting of bags, tanglers, food and liquids, textiles, or hazardous materials.
- Other criteria as determined by MassDEP.

Terms and Conditions

- Municipalities receiving Recycling IQ Kit funds must sign a Scope of Work with standard operating procedures, timeline, and budget. Find samples and inspiration in the [Welcome Kit](#).
- Municipalities receiving Recycling IQ Kit funds are strongly encouraged to attend a training session to be scheduled in the first quarter of the calendar year.
- Recycling IQ Kit funds will be distributed on a reimbursement basis based on actual costs and an approved budget.
- Reimbursable expenses must be incurred after the Scope of Work, standard operating procedures, timeline, and budget have been approved by MassDEP.
- Outstanding MassDEP compliance issues, including past due required reports, may not disqualify a municipality from receiving an award. HOWEVER, any such award may be conditioned upon the satisfactory resolution of said compliance issue.

Timeline

- Applications will be accepted, reviewed, and awarded on a rolling basis between Jan 2 May 15.
- Most awards will be made within three weeks of submission.
- *All projects must be implemented between April 1 and November 30 of the calendar year awarded.*

Funding Amounts

Applicants with curbside programs that agree to implement the prescribed elements of the program will be provided the following resources based on total number of households (HH):

- HH <2,000 = up to \$10,000
- HH 2,000 – 2,999 = up to \$15,000
- HH 3,000 – 5,999 = up to \$20,000
- HH 6,000 – 11,999 = up to \$30,000
- HH >12,000 = up to \$40,000

Up to 40 hours of Municipal Assistance Coordinator (MAC) time will be provided to first time IQ Kit grantees. Second time grantees will have reduced access to MAC time, but will still receive some level of MassDEP support as needed.

Deliverables to be submitted and approved by MassDEP prior to making expenditures that will be reimbursed by the grant:

- Detailed budget of all relevant program expenses including those paid for by the municipality and those to be reimbursed by MassDEP.
- Standard Operating Procedures detailing the project plan, data collection plan, etc.
- Detailed timeline that includes program start and stop dates, target dates for ordering and distribution of collateral materials, maintenance checking dates (for returning grantees only), and any other relevant information.
- Find samples and inspiration in the [Welcome Kit](#).

Reporting Requirements:

A final report summarizing the project, conclusions, and recommendations or next steps (as appropriate) using the final report template provided in the [Welcome Kit](#) must be submitted by December 31 of the calendar year the program is implemented. The report must include:

- Set-out rate, tagging rate, and contamination rate (obtained from MRF audits)
- Returning IQ Kit grantees must provide results from program maintenance checks (as outlined in scope of work)
- Final invoice for IQ Kit grant reimbursement

Grantees must complete their annual MassDEP Recycling and Solid Waste Survey by February 15 of the year following program implementation.

Use of Recycling IQ Kit Funds

Funds must be used to implement a recycling contamination enforcement program using the prescribed methodology in the Recycling IQ Kit. Funds may **not** be used to conduct general recycling program duties, pay for an existing Recycling Coordinator or to enforce other violations not expressly documented in the Recycling IQ Kit and Scope of Work. **Hours worked on any part of this project by full-time, salaried municipal employees or contractors are not eligible for reimbursement.** Part-time salaried employees or contractors who work on contamination enforcement, data gathering, and analysis are only eligible for reimbursement for hours that are in addition to their regularly scheduled time.

Reimbursable Activities

At a minimum, municipalities receiving Recycling IQ Kit funds will need to print the Core Tools, collateral material which consists of an annual info card mailer, a targeted message mailer, warning tags, and “oops” tags. In addition to producing the Core Tools, funds may be used for:

- Hiring staff to lift recycling cart lids and/or check bins on curbside collection routes, collect, and analyze data
- Printing other collateral materials from artwork in Recycling IQ Kit
- The production of social media materials related to contamination reduction such as videos and/or promoting your local program on social media platforms

- Paying contractor/consultant to update/design municipal recycling web page

Printed Material (Collateral)

Unless otherwise approved by MassDEP, municipalities receiving Recycling IQ Kit funds must use Tiger Press (state contracted printing vendor) for graphics and printed materials. Tiger Press will bill MassDEP directly for all printed material included in the approved budget. An initial meeting should be set with Tiger Press to discuss selected options and receive quotes within two weeks of kick-off meeting. *Note: All postage must be paid for by municipality and submitted for reimbursement to MassDEP¹.*

Certain exceptions apply:

- A city or town with a strong relationship with a local printer may continue to use that printer with approval from MassDEP. In this case, the municipality will be billed directly for all services and will submit for reimbursement to MassDEP.
- A-frames and yard signs may be purchased through another vendor, though Tiger Press does provide these services.

A complete list of pre-approved outreach materials will be provided after the grant is awarded. Any ideas for printed materials not on the pre-approved list must be reviewed and approved by MassDEP before purchase.

MassDEP is working toward consistent messaging across the Commonwealth. To that end, artwork and Core Tools may be customized with city/town name, seal, website, contact information, and secondary language. **No other modifications will be allowed.**

MassDEP strongly encourages municipalities to use RDP funds to subsidize this program in the case that IQ Kit funds do not cover all expenses.

Requests for Reimbursement

Grantees should submit reimbursement forms at least once a quarter, but not more than once a month. Find payroll, mileage, and reimbursement form templates in the [Welcome Kit](#). Please note that the fiscal year ends June 30. **Any expenses paid prior to June 30 must be submitted for reimbursement before July 15.** The State is very strict with fiscal year payments. You will not be reimbursed for previous fiscal year expenses submitted after July 15.

Community Match

There is an in-kind match requirement for this grant. While this grant does not require a monetary match, communities that provide a hard match will have a competitive advantage in the evaluation process. The in-kind match is met through the hours spent by the municipal

¹ The default method for postage will be the use of Walk Sequence Saturation Mail. Standard Mail may be acceptable in some cases, but requires changes to formatting, and thus incurs an additional expense for modification by the printer. Note: Estimates for postage are NOT exact. Create a buffer in your budget to allow for unforeseen costs.

Recycling Coordinator (or municipal employee fulfilling that function) to set up and manage this program. Those activities include, but are not limited to:

- Determining project goals and bringing stakeholders together to achieve goals.
- Data Gathering. Determining which routes to target (working with GIS or planning department to obtain mailing addresses/parcel map), understanding current contamination level, speaking with MRF to determine on which contaminant(s) to focus targeted messaging, and other relevant data gathering.
- Logistics. Collaborating with hauler to ensure municipal staff can enforce before trucks pick up, setting up grading system and frequency of load evaluation with MRF operators, etc.
- Budgeting grant expenditures and municipal hard match (if any).
- Education and outreach. Choosing collateral material, working with printer to obtain quotes and finalize materials, researching methods for advertising, (e.g. setting up advertising with Facebook, local grocery stores, putting signs up at schools, setting up radio ads/Youtube videos, or billboards), setting up information card(s) mailing schedule, ordering printed material, mailers and signage.
- Scoping the project. Developing timelines for kick-off meeting, Core Tool preparation, launch, operational period, evaluation, submission of scope and associated documents.
- Tactics. Developing enforcement protocols, training staff, creating data collection sheets/methods.
- Staffing. Hiring workers, developing roles and responsibilities, prepping municipal workers who interact with residents about the program (in order to answer residents' questions).
- Feedback. Providing regular updates to your municipal assistance coordinator (MAC).
- Writing final report.

Pro Tips from folks who've used the Curbside IQ Kit:

- ✓ **It will take 6-8 weeks of preparation time to set up this program.** Consider this very seriously when setting your launch date. Before you begin, review the [Curbside Checklist](#) in the Recycling IQ Kit for curbside programs to get an idea of the steps you will need to take to be successful.
- ✓ Speak to your printer early and often to insure you have a reasonable budget and are able to maintain your timeline.
- ✓ Practice and training work! MassDEP will pay for staff time to do at least one walk through of a route for training and Warning tag dissemination purposes. This will allow you to get a baseline failure/set-out rate, build consistency among staff, and understand just how long it takes to get through the number of parcels you've chosen for each route.
- ✓ Inclement weather is hard on "oops tags," data sheets, and enforcement staff. You can be flexible and simply add weeks to the end of your program to make up for any days you were unable to inspect and tag recycling carts.
- ✓ Anticipate vacation weeks and holidays, and schedule around them. You can start earlier or tack on a week at the end to avoid wasted efforts on these weeks.

- ✓ Have talking points ready. Figure out a message that will resonate with your residents, and when they ask why you are doing what you're doing, have those messages top of mind. Focus groups have found that worker health and safety is a powerful message that doesn't require a lot of explanation: Workers climb onto star screens to clean off plastic bags and wrapping and that is dangerous. Another message that often resonates is simple economics: Our processing costs go up if our recycling is contaminated.
- ✓ Revisit your checklist often to make sure you are on track.

Drop-Off Guidelines

Overview

Use this document to learn how to apply for funding and technical assistance to implement the [Recycling IQ Kit in a drop-off community](#). The Recycling IQ Kit has been designed to provide steps, tools, and resources to help improve the quality of your recycling program. Increasing the quality of the recycling stream can save on recycling and disposal fees, improve resident satisfaction with your program, and ensure the success and sustainability of the recycling system.

The toolkit includes:

- Tips for engaging with your MRF
- Instructions and tools for targeted messages
- Tools for tracking and reporting results
- Customizable artwork for education and outreach
- Resources for implementation of direct drop-off feedback

Drop-off communities awarded Recycling IQ Kit grant will receive funds for printed materials such as mailings or handouts, A-frame signs depicting top contaminants that can be rotated throughout the year at the drop-off center, and permanent signs. Note: You do not need to be awarded the grant to use the Drop-off Recycling IQ Kit and its accompanying resources – the resources are open source and available for use by anyone at any time.

Eligible Applicants

Individual Massachusetts drop-off municipalities are limited to one IQ Kit grant award.

Application Submission Process

1. Read the Drop-off Recycling IQ Kit and all of the accompanying resources.
2. Speak with your Municipal Assistance Coordinator to determine your readiness for implementing the prescribed elements of the Recycling IQ Kit.
3. Apply for Recycling IQ Kit Technical Assistance via [Re-TRAC Connect™](#).
4. Municipal Recycling Data Reporting
 - a. At the time the application is submitted, applicants must have completed and submitted via Re-TRAC Connect™ Municipal Recycling and Solid Waste Surveys for the two previous calendar years.

Evaluation criteria

This is a competitive grant. Applicants will be evaluated on criteria that may include, but not be limited to:

- Information provided on Recycling and Solid Waste Program Surveys.
- Information provided in the application.
- Past grant performance including outstanding grant requirements.
- Demonstrated contamination issue i.e., contamination of the recycling at greater than 10% as reported by your MRF or recycling vendor, and consisting of bags, tanglers, food and liquids, textiles, and/or hazardous materials.

- Other criteria as determined by MassDEP.

Terms and Conditions

- This is a one-time only grant.
- Municipalities receiving Recycling IQ Kit funds must sign a Grant Agreement that includes a Scope of Work, timeline, program plan, and budget. Find samples and inspiration in the [Welcome Kit](#).
- Recycling IQ Kit funds will be distributed on a reimbursement basis and only for DEP approved expenditures.
- Reimbursable expenses may not be incurred until after a Grant Agreement has been executed with MassDEP.
- Outstanding MassDEP compliance issues, including past due required reports, may not disqualify a municipality from receiving an award. HOWEVER, any such award may be conditioned upon the satisfactory resolution of said compliance issue.

Timeline

- Applications will be accepted, reviewed, and awarded on a rolling basis between Jan 2 May 15.
- Most awards will be made within three weeks of submission.
- *All projects must be implemented between April 1 and November 30 of the calendar year awarded.*

Funding Amounts

All applicants with drop-off programs that agree to implement the prescribed elements of the program will be provided the following resources:

- Up to \$6,000
- Up to 40 hours of Municipal Assistance Coordinator (MAC) time to assist on IQ Kit implementation.

Reporting Requirements:

A final report summarizing the project, conclusions, and recommendations or next steps (as appropriate) using the final report template provided in the [Welcome Kit](#) must be submitted within 30 days of the end of your implementation period. The report must include:

- Pictures of permanent signs and a-frame signs, PDF of informational mailer or handout

Grantees must complete their annual MassDEP Recycling and Solid Waste Survey by February 15 of the year following program implementation.

Use of Recycling IQ Kit Funds

Funds must be used to implement a recycling contamination enforcement program using the prescribed methodology in the Recycling IQ Kit. Funds *may not* be used to conduct general recycling program duties, pay for an existing Recycling Coordinator or to enforce other violations not expressly documented in the Recycling IQ Kit and Scope of Work. **Hours worked on any part of this project by full-time, salaried employees are not eligible for reimbursement.**

Reimbursable Activities

At a minimum, municipalities receiving Recycling IQ Kit funds will need to print the Core Tools. For drop-off communities, the **Core Tools consist of an annual information card that can be distributed at the drop-off location, top issue signage (must include a-frames with “no bags/no bagged recyclables” and “no food or liquid” messaging) to be temporarily (no more than six weeks at a time) and strategically placed around the site, and uniform permanent site signage.** Uniform permanent site signage should be positive messages ONLY. “No Bags,” “No Trash,” etc. type messages are not part of the artwork available for permanent signs, and should be limited to temporary signage. In addition to the Core Tools, funds may be used for:

- Postage to send an annual information mailer to residents
- Printing other collateral materials from artwork in Recycling IQ Kit
- The production of social media materials related to contamination reduction such as videos and/or promoting your local program on social media platforms
- Recycling web page design/updates
- Other expenses as approved by MassDEP

Requests for Reimbursement

Grantees should submit one reimbursement request along with their final report. Find the reimbursement form template in the [Welcome Kit](#). Please note that the fiscal year ends June 30. **Any expenses paid prior to June 30 must be submitted for reimbursement before July 15, so be aware of the dates on your invoices.** The State is very strict with fiscal year payments. You will not be reimbursed for previous fiscal year expenses submitted after July 15.

Printed Material (Collateral)

Unless otherwise approved by MassDEP, municipalities receiving Recycling IQ Kit funds must use Tiger Press (state contracted printing vendor) for graphics and printed materials. Tiger Press will bill the municipality directly for all graphic work, printed material, and postage. The municipality will then request reimbursement from MassDEP.

Certain exceptions apply:

- A-frames and yard signs may be purchased through another vendor, though Tiger Press does provide these services.
- Tiger Press can produce transfer station signs, however, MassDEP recommends using a vendor that specializes in street signs.

A complete list of pre-approved outreach materials will be provided after the grant is awarded. Any ideas for printed materials that are not on the pre-approved list must be reviewed and approved by MassDEP before purchase.

MassDEP is working toward consistent messaging across the Commonwealth. To that end, artwork and Core Tools may be customized with city/town name, seal, website, contact information, and secondary language. **No other modifications will be allowed.**

MassDEP strongly encourages municipalities to use RDP funds to subsidize this program in the case that IQ Kit funds do not cover all expenses.

Community Match

There is an in-kind match requirement for this grant. While this grant does not require a monetary match, communities that provide a hard match will have a competitive advantage in the evaluation process. The in-kind match is met through the hours spent by the municipal Recycling Coordinator (or municipal employee fulfilling that function) to set up and manage this program. Those activities include, but are not limited to:

- Staff at drop-off locations who will engage and educate residents about proper recycling.
- Determining project goals and bringing stakeholders together to achieve goals.
- Developing a spending budget and timeline.
- Choosing outreach pieces, working with printer to obtain quotes and finalize materials, researching methods for advertising, (e.g. setting up advertising with Facebook, local grocery stores, putting signs up at schools, setting up radio ads/Youtube videos, or billboards), setting up information card(s) mailing schedule, ordering printed material, mailers and signage.
- Providing regular updates to your municipal assistance coordinator (MAC)
Writing final report.

Pro Tips from folks who've used the Drop-off IQ Kit:

- ✓ **It will take 6-8 weeks of preparation time to set up this program.** Consider this very seriously when setting your launch date. Before you begin, review the [Drop-off Checklist](#) in the Recycling IQ Kit for drop-off programs to get an idea of the steps you will need to take to be successful.
- ✓ Speak to your printer early and often to insure you have a reasonable budget and are able to maintain your timeline.
- ✓ Mark your calendar to remind yourself when it is time to remove or rotate temporary signs so that residents don't get "message fatigue."
- ✓ Have talking points ready. Figure out a message that will resonate with your residents, and when they ask why you are doing what you're doing, have those messages top of mind. Focus groups have found that worker health and safety is a powerful message that doesn't require a lot of explanation: Workers climb onto star screens to clean off plastic bags and wrapping and that is dangerous. Another message that often resonates is simple economics: Our processing costs go up if our recycling is contaminated.